

73<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL MEETING  
OF THE  
SOUTHERN LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

# INTERIM REPORT



SLC 2019

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

# DEAR FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES

As you all know, following the naming of Tropical Storm Barry, which later became Hurricane Barry, the decision was made to cancel the 73<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of the Southern Legislative Conference. While unprecedented in our SLC history, President of the Senate, John A. Alario, SLC director, Ms. Colleen Cousineau, and I made this decision for the safety and wellbeing of the more than 1,500 expected SLC attendees who would be arriving in New Orleans on the day Hurricane Barry was anticipated to make landfall.

For our members who have hosted an SLC annual meeting, you know the countless hours and days of planning—along with fundraising—that is required. After such intense preparation by both our Louisiana Host State and our SLC staff, it was a true disappointment to us all.

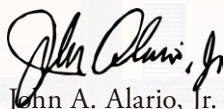
The SLC annual meetings bring together old friends and colleagues who look forward to seeing each other every year; children who have “grown up” together in our youth programs; and spouses and guests who renew old friendships and make new acquaintances. Our substantive and policy-rich programming is unparalleled, highlighting innovative, as well as practical, solutions to the challenges facing our policymakers and citizens. Every SLC annual meeting offers our members a nonpartisan space where policy discussions spanning the spectrum can be had and ideas can germinate, strengthening our legislative institutions.

In the absence of our convening, we still were compelled to conduct a number of activities. This interim report provides a summary of the actions executed by the SLC Executive Committee. Additionally, it gives us the opportunity to thank all our Louisiana Host State volunteers and contributors who committed their time and resources toward the meeting. We are sure our guests would have enjoyed experiencing the wonderful and unique sights, sounds and tastes of the city of New Orleans and the state of Louisiana.

Until we meet again,



Taylor F. Barras  
Speaker of the House  
SLC Chair, 2018-2019



John A. Alario, Jr.  
President of the Senate



Colleen Cousineau  
Director,  
Southern Legislative Conference

# THANK YOU

The Southern Legislative Conference is exceedingly grateful for the legions of volunteers from both the Louisiana House of Representatives and Senate who worked in unison for months to welcome colleagues and friends throughout the Southern region to New Orleans.

Cliff Chaney • Robyn Cockerham • Kari Couvillon • Stacy DeLaney • Brenda Ellington  
Mechelle Evans • Jerry Guillot • Christi Impastato • Marie Lively • Cindy Mancuso  
Renee Mozee • Linda Nugent • Sandy Painting • June Peay • Michelle Pickering  
Morgan Robertson • Stephanie Robin • Clarence Russ • Debra Russell • Gay Smith  
Cory Stewart • Tom Tyler • Sabrina Whitaker • J.W. Wiley • Dee Womack

Xavier Alexander • Ashton Anderson • Danielle Baker • Danielle Barringer • Christina Bastien  
Mary Bean • Sadie Becnel • Megan Bella • Tyler Bosworth • Greg Boutte • Brandi Cannon  
Anita Carr • Louis Carral • Debra Carter • Nancy Cassagne • Leroy Cavalier  
Darrell Cesario • Ashleigh Clare-Kearney Thigpen • Shayla Cockerm • Sylvia Copper  
Guillermo Cordon • Margaret Corley • Charlotte Cravins • Brittany Desselle  
Nevonda Reed Dobard • Kim Dodd • Jill Eldridge • Celeste Ellis • Glenn Fleming  
Kelly Fogleman • Michelle Fontenot • Raynel Gascon • Linda Gipson • Thomas Giroir  
Patrick Goldsmith • Louis Gomez • Shenaee Graves • Amber Guillot • Mike Hasten  
Chris Henry • Dana Henry • Martha Hess • Patrick Holley • Stacey Holley • Linda Hopkins  
Janice Hughes • Bobbie Hunter • Felicie Jackson • Zaren James • Cortny Jarrell  
Dot Jarvis • Michelle Johnson • Trin Johnson • Chris Keaton • John Keller • Curry Lann  
Charlesetta Lavergne • Katie LeLeux • Danny Leming • Crystal Lewis • Kathy Liberty  
Anthony Long • Lisa Lovello • Patricia Lowrey • Lewis Lyles • Sharon Lyles • Mark Mahaffey  
Ty Marchand • Renee Marshall-Williams • Tim Mathis • Tyler McCloud • Diane Merritt  
Alan Miller • Drew Murray • Chas Nichols • Lynn Noland • Alexis Normand  
Mary O'Brien • Maggie O'Roark • Christine Peck • Wallace Perrault • Sherry Phillips-Hymel  
Rhonda Repetowski • Michelle Ridge • Tina Righteous • Greg Riley • Bryce Robinson  
Kelsey Rome • Debbie Roussel • Tracey Russ • Gary Schaefer • Jane Schoen • Willie Marie Scott  
Cheryl Serrett • Candace Shields • Andrea Simmons • Shannon Simpson • Angela Smith  
Ron Smith • Jackie Snowden • Robin Stalder • Sarai Stansberry • Karen Stephens  
Jenna Steward • Kendra Stone • Tracy Sudduth • Jamie Tairov • Shannon Templet  
Walter Thomas • Amanda Trapp • Samuel Vaccaro • Daniel Waguespack • Jennifer Watson  
Barbara Weatherspoon • Stephanie Weinman • Lynn Williams • Adrienne Wood  
Jason Young • Catherine Zeringue • Elaine Zoudlik



# 2019-2020 SLC LEADERSHIP

## ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Due to the cancellation of the Annual Meeting, voting for 2019-2020 Conference officers was conducted electronically in accordance with the Annual Meeting Interim Procedure outlined in the Rules of the Southern Legislative Conference.

The rules also stipulate that officers of SLC Standing Committees may serve a maximum of two consecutive one-year terms. If the chair of a Standing Committee met this maximum length of service, the committee's vice chair will serve as acting chair for 2019-2020. Otherwise, the chair and vice chair continue serving in their current capacities.



**CHAIR**  
**Speaker**  
**Tim Moore**  
North Carolina



**CHAIR ELECT**  
**Lieutenant Governor and**  
**Speaker of the Senate**  
**Randy McNally**  
Tennessee



**IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR**  
**Speaker**  
**Taylor Barras**  
Louisiana

## AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE



**ACTING CHAIR**  
**Senator**  
**Casey Murdock**  
Oklahoma

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TRANSPORTATION & CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE



**CHAIR**  
**Representative**  
**Manly Barton**  
Mississippi



**VICE CHAIR**  
**Representative**  
**Nathaniel Ledbetter**  
Alabama

## EDUCATION COMMITTEE



**ACTING CHAIR**  
**Representative**  
**Kathryn Swan**  
Missouri

## ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE



**CHAIR**  
**Senator**  
**Ed Emery**  
Missouri



**VICE CHAIR**  
**Representative**  
**Jim Gooch Jr.**  
Kentucky

## FISCAL AFFAIRS & GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE



**CHAIR**  
**Representative**  
**Penny Houston**  
Georgia



**VICE CHAIR**  
**Representative**  
**John Read**  
Mississippi

## HUMAN SERVICES & PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE



**CHAIR**  
**Senator**  
**Katrina Shealy**  
South Carolina



**VICE CHAIR**  
**Representative**  
**Fredrick J. Love**  
Arkansas

## LEGISLATIVE SERVICE AGENCY DIRECTORS GROUP



**CHAIR**  
**Marcia Johnson**  
**RESEARCH DIRECTOR**  
House of Representatives  
Oklahoma

## SLC OFFICE



**Colleen Cousineau**  
**DIRECTOR**  
Southern Legislative Conference  
**DIRECTOR**  
Southern Office of  
The Council of State Governments

# STATE TRANSFORMATION IN ACTION RECOGNITION (STAR)

The State Transformation in Action Recognition (STAR) Judges Panel—comprising state legislators, legislative staff and policy experts—reviewed application materials and presentations of the five finalists and voted online to select two winners of the 2019 STAR award: Kentucky’s MyPURPOSE and Tennessee Reconnect.

## **MYPURPOSE** **KENTUCKY PERSONNEL CABINET**

In 2017, the Kentucky Personnel Cabinet established a talent management strategy and vision to affect how the Commonwealth attracts, recruits, and retains talent. Launched in 2018, MyPURPOSE provides a visually engaging portal for external job applicants, the ability to quickly apply for jobs via mobile or desktop applications or through a LinkedIn profile, and a means for state agencies to customize job postings by including videos with job posts.

MyPURPOSE also created an internal portal for state employees, which provides access to promotional opportunities and professional development. State employees can take advantage of a catalog of more than 1,400 curated courses for personal and professional growth, at no cost. Since going live in July 2018, MyPURPOSE has seen:

- » 74,000+ registered users (candidates and employees);
- » 207,000+ training registrations and/or completions; and
- » 2,500 candidates hired.



**LEFT TO RIGHT:** LaDonna Koebel, Chief of Staff, and Katherine North, Communications Director, Kentucky Personnel Cabinet



#### LEFT TO RIGHT:

Mary Laphen, Network Director; Jessica Gibson, Assistant Executive Director of Adult Learner Initiatives; Karla Coleman Garcia, Director of Strategic Alignment; and Tina Shreeve, Outreach Coordinator, Tennessee Reconnect



Emily House,  
Deputy Executive Director,  
Tennessee Higher Education Corporation

## TENNESSEE RECONNECT TENNESSEE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

Tennessee Reconnect is an initiative to help more adults return to higher education by providing a last-dollar scholarship that pays any tuition and fees charged at community colleges that are not covered by other sources of grant aid. These scholarship awards, on average, are approximately \$1,000 per student.

In fall 2013, former Governor Bill Haslam announced his “Drive to 55,” with the goal that 55 percent of Tennesseans would hold a postsecondary credential by the year 2025. At the time, 36 percent of Tennesseans met this benchmark. Following the success of programs serving younger age groups, updates and modifications were made to Tennessee’s free college framework to serve adults.

Tennessee Reconnect was developed in response to the needs of employers across the state. In focus groups, they stated that there were numerous job vacancies that could not be filled, as applicants for these jobs did not have the appropriate training or skills, particularly in technical fields. With this scholarship program, Tennesseans of all ages can earn the relevant, marketable credentials necessary to succeed in the labor market. Since implementation, state-wide postsecondary degree attainment has increased to 43 percent.

## CARTER/HELLARD LEGISLATIVE STAFF AWARD



### LEFT TO RIGHT:

Colleen Cousineau, Director, Southern Legislative Conference; Betsy Howerton, Deputy Legislative Counsel, Georgia General Assembly; Rick Ruskell, Legislative Counsel, Georgia General Assembly; Nick Bowman, Research and Publications Associate, Southern Legislative Conference; Marcia Johnson, Research Director, Oklahoma House of Representatives

The Carter/Hellard Legislative Staff Award is given annually to a staff member who has demonstrated excellence and dedication in service to state legislatures in the South. Betsy Howerton, deputy legislative counsel for the Georgia General Assembly, was selected by the members of the Legislative Service Agency (LSA) Directors Group as the winner of the 2019 Carter/Hellard award. Speaker David Ralston and Legislative Counsel Rick Ruskell nominated Howerton for the award.

Howerton joined the Office of Legislative Counsel in 2002, having previously worked for Georgia's Department of Transportation and Department of Education. In addition to serving as deputy legislative counsel, Howerton is the staff attorney for the House Committees on Education, Health and Human Services and Code Revision.

In his nomination letter, Speaker Ralston described Howerton as someone "who is always a pleasure to work with and provides much needed expert advice on complex issues our state seeks to address and improve upon. She handles these arduous tasks without any indication that the pressure has been too much, because she handles it all with grace."

Marcia Johnson, chair of the LSA Directors Group, presented the award to Howerton in a ceremony at the Georgia State Capitol on August 14. Among those present were Speaker Ralston, Legislative Counsel Rick Ruskell, Director of the House Budget and Research Office Martha Wigton, SLC Director Colleen Cousineau and Research and Publications Associate Nick Bowman.



# SLC 2020

## 74TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SOUTHERN LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE



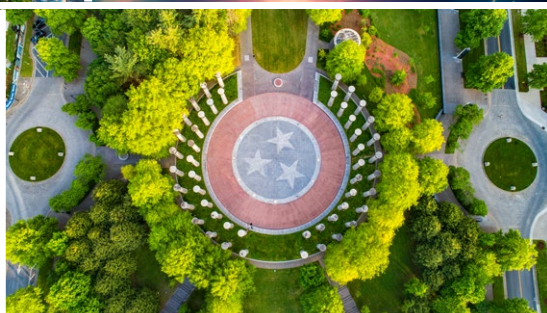
WINSTON-SALEM  
AUGUST 1-5, 2020

The North Carolina Host State Committee cordially invites you to the 74<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Southern Legislative Conference in Winston-Salem next August, where you will have an “Outlandish” experience from our mountains to our coast.

In the state’s official tartan, the weaving of landscapes, along with European, African and indigenous American cultural influences, create the tapestry of the Carolinas. Within the plaid, the panoramic views of the region are embodied by the white, yellow and red of the dogwood, poplar and maple, while the shades and tones portray the green, rolling Piedmont hills, Smoky Mountain ridges and the crowning blue of a coastal Carolina summer sky.

A Southern host promises good food, good drinks and good friends! We will have it all in 2020—fresh seafood, eastern and western BBQ, peanuts, sweet potatoes, Krispy Kreme Doughnuts, and Moravian cookies. North Carolina is famous for its vineyards and craft beer; and do not forget our homegrown soft-drinks Cheerwine, Sundrop and Pepsi-Cola! Everyone will have a good time dancing to beach music and experiencing Scottish, Cherokee, Moravian, Coastal and Farm cultures. We also will showcase our HBCU university talent and salute our military service men and women. You do not want to miss it!

# FUTURE SLC ANNUAL MEETINGS



In the summer of 2021, the Southern Legislative Conference will return to its origins in Tennessee, the host of the first SLC Annual Meeting, held in Memphis, Tennessee, in 1947, as well as its 50<sup>th</sup>, convened in Nashville, Tennessee, in 1996. Continuing in this tradition, the Tennessee General Assembly welcomes its friends and colleagues to Nashville, The Country Music Capital of the World, for a remarkable and memorable 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Annual Meeting.

## SUMMER 2022

76<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING  
OF THE  
SOUTHERN LEGISLATIVE  
CONFERENCE

**OKLAHOMA CITY,  
OKLAHOMA**



# APPRECIATION

The Southern Legislative Conference extends special thanks to the following friends in the private sector for their generous assistance to the 73<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting. We are grateful for their continued support and interest in the Conference over the years.

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SOUTHERN LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

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*Director, Southern Office of*  
*The Council of State Governments*



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